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SOME CHARACTERISTICS AND PECULIARITIES OF MENDELSSOHN'S ORGAN SONATAS

By ORLANDO A. MANSFIELD

SPEAKING of the organ parts which Mendelssohn wrote to certain of his oratorios and other choral works, the late Sir John Stainer once remarked, "I find them quite a study as works of art." Were Sir John with us to-day he would doubtless be quite prepared to make the same admission with reference to Mendelssohn's six Organ Sonatas,—works which, according to the late organist of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, Dr. A. L. Peace, "marked an epoch in the history of organ music," and "laid the foundation of the modern school of organ playing." Concerning the history and analysis of works so highly esteemed a great deal has, of course, been written. The present paper, however, is intended to be devoted less to these points than to a "study" of some of the principal and most prominent characteristics and peculiarities of the music itself. In other words, our researches are introspective rather than retrospective. We inquire into the mystery rather than into the history of these epoch-making works which have not only stood the test of more than half a century's criticism and performance but were, at the time of their production, and with the exception of the organ works of J. S. Bach, the most original compositions then written for the king of instruments,—the first-fruits of the rich harvest of modern organ music.

With the exception of the 3rd Sonata, which was written in August, 1844, all the six Organ Sonatas were composed during the months of December, 1844, and January, 1845. As might reasonably be expected from works produced in such rapid succession, there are certain general characteristics which run, like a thread, through the whole series. Foremost amongst these peculiarities is the fact that not a single movement of these sonatas is in orthodox form. The term Sonata is, therefore, somewhat of a misnomer. As is now well known, Mendelssohn was originally commissioned by Messrs. Coventry and Hollier, of London, England, to write three Voluntaries. Not being quite clear as to what might be meant by this term, Mendelssohn finally decided to call the works Sonatas, but this was not until

after some idea had been entertained of calling the compositions a School of Organ Playing. It has been suggested that, perhaps, Mendelssohn avoided the modern binary form in order that his works might more closely resemble the English Voluntaries of such writers as Samuel Wesley and William Russell, and thus appeal the more readily to the ears of the English organists for whose use they were primarily commissioned. But, inasmuch as Mendelssohn, in a letter to Mr. Coventry, written from Frankfort on the 29th of August, 1844, says, "I do not know what it (the word Voluntary) means precisely," the above mentioned suggestion can scarcely be said to meet the case. Besides, the English voluntaries were not founded upon, and did not as a rule include hymn-tunes, especially the German Choral, which latter Mendelssohn introduced in three of his six sonatas. It may be that he considered "first movement" form unsuited to the king of instruments. Of greater probability is the suggestion that Mendelssohn intended his Sonatas for church use,—hence the introduction of Chorals,—and that for that purpose he considered modern sonata form too lengthy. But our own idea is that the forms embodied in Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas were those he considered best suited to the genius of the instrument, or, perhaps, to the comparatively limited capabilities of the instruments of his day. To us it has always seemed that the *Andante con moto* and the Finale of the 5th Sonata most closely resemble sonata form,—the first of these movements having a phrase (which does duty for a second subject) announced in the key of the dominant and recapitulated in that of the tonic; while the Finale contains more thematic development than almost any other movement in these works, and has much in common with rondo-sonata form. It is, however, a remarkable fact that, with the exception of the *Andante* above named, all the slow movements in these sonatas are in simple binary form, the form Mendelssohn seemed to prefer for the majority of his more animated movements. A near approach to simple rondo form is to be found in the third movement of the 2nd Sonata,—the first movement of the 4th Sonata tending more towards ternary form. The Air with Variations is only employed in the 6th Sonata. One thing Mendelssohn certainly secured by the forms he used, and that one thing was brevity,—a brevity which must have afforded a strong contrast to the long-winded platitudes of men like Rinck, Neukomm, and other contemporary writers for the organ.

In commencing most of his Sonatas, Mendelssohn exhibits a fondness for a dignified introduction in slow *tempo* and full

harmony. The best example of this is found in the *Grave* of the 2nd Sonata and the *Con moto maestoso* of the 3rd. But, as a matter of fact, the first ten measures of the 1st Sonata form an introduction of similar character; while the Chorals of the 5th and 6th Sonatas may be regarded as partial exemplifications of the same principle. Completing our reference to the "full harmony" of these introductory movements, we would point out that the Chorals of the 5th and 6th Sonatas are in five-part harmony; while the introductory bars of the 1st Sonata, and the opening movements of the 2nd and 3rd Sonatas, contain numerous passages and progressions in five or more real parts.

In concluding two of his Organ Sonatas,—Nos. 3 and 6,—Mendelssohn introduces a soft slow movement of a devotional character. This movement, however, although containing some melodic reminiscence of material which has preceded it, is not an essential to the form of the Sonata. Thus, the 3rd Sonata really ends with the modified recapitulation of the *Con moto maestoso*; while the 6th Sonata could, if desired, end at the conclusion of the *Fuga*. Attempt has been made to account for these terminal slow movements on other than artistic grounds. Thus, Dr. Sawyer suggests that the Sonatas containing Chorals were written "to form an integral part of the Lutheran service," and that the closing with a slow movement, "although completely at variance with the accepted tenets in form matters, is yet so natural if the work was to form an introduction to a fresh act of worship." However this may be, a matter much more pertinent to the present paper is that in the final *Andantes* of the 3rd and 6th Sonatas we have thematic reminiscences, unconscious or otherwise, of previously employed material. Thus, in the second phrase of the first sentence of the *Andante* concluding the 3rd Sonata, we have:—



Ex. 1. being a reminiscence of the second line of the Choral, "*Aus tiefer Noth*," over which the double fugue is constructed, *e. g.*,



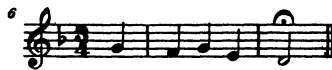
and Ex. 2. being a reminiscence of the third motive of the first fugue subject, *e. g.*,



Similarly, in the concluding *Andante* of the 6th Sonata, we commence with



a modified transposition into the tonic of the melody of the concluding measures of the preceding Fuga which read:—

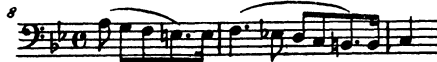


From this it would appear that Mendelssohn was quite capable of preserving the true sonata spirit even when departing from the letter, and was at all times able to give examples of that likeness with a difference which is the hall mark of classical development and congruity.

Another interesting example of these thematic coincidences is to be found in measures 9-13 of the first movement of the 3rd Sonata. Here, in the pedals, we have the figures



which are decided anticipations of the second figure of the subject of the *fugato* of the last movement, *e. g.*,

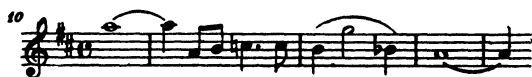


We are not aware that either of these coincidences has ever been pointed out before.

Quite as remarkable as Mendelssohn's avoidance of modern sonata form in his Organ Sonatas is the fact that such material as may be termed the second subjects of his movements is announced after the close of the first part of the movement, and is, very often, in the tonic key. To this generalization the *Andante con moto* from the 5th Sonata is an exception, its 2nd subject, in measures 16 to 20, being announced in the key of the dominant. But the second subject of the last movement of the 1st Sonata is a striking confirmation of our former statement, *e. g.*,



Another instance is the second subject of the *Allegro maestoso* of the 5th Sonata, *e. g.*,



Each of these subjects is in the key of its tonic, and is preceded by a full close marking the end of the first part of the movement. The same applies to the second subjects of the first movements of the 1st and 4th Sonatas, with the exception that neither of the latter are in the tonic key. The second subject of the first movement of the 1st Sonata is the Choral, in the relative major key. This is preceded by a full close in C minor marking the end of the first part of the movement. The second subject of the first movement of the 4th Sonata commences in the relative minor, and is preceded by a full close in B♭, the tonic key.

Like a true disciple and ardent admirer of Bach, Mendelssohn exhibits in these Sonatas a great fondness and ability for the combination of subjects already heard separately. A striking instance of this treatment is to be found in the third part of the first movement of the 4th Sonata. Here the arpeggio figure of the first subject (*a*) is combined with the march-like rhythm of the second subject (*b*) with the most happy effect and in the most felicitous manner, *e. g.*,



Another example, of shorter duration, but of equally charming effect, is to be found in the final section of the first movement of the 1st Sonata. Here the first (fugal) subject (*a*) is combined with the second subject,—the Choral,—in a masterly manner, *e. g.*,



These examples are, however, entirely eclipsed by the combination to be found in the second part of the double fugue over a Choral

Some Characteristics of Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas 567

in the 3rd Sonata. Here the two fugue subjects, each of which has been expounded and developed separately, are combined thus:



The whole of this example is inverted in the 15th a few bars later; and, finally, appears over a tonic pedal formed by a prolongation of the last note of the Choral.

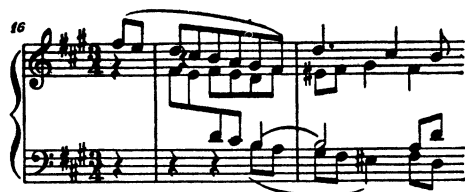
These evidences of Mendelssohn's scholarship,—which was none the less ripe because never obtrusive,—lead us to remark upon his evident fondness for “close” imitation. From many examples we select a few. Of these the 1st Sonata furnishes us with three, the first of which is to be found in the final section of the first movement, two measures before the combination shown in Ex. 12:—



Here the imitation is at the octave below, and upon the initial notes of the first subject. The *Recitativo* furnishes some interesting examples of close imitation, culminating, in the penultimate sentence, in a canon 2 in 1 at the octave below. Our third example is drawn from the final section of the Finale, *e. g.*,



Here the imitation is freer in character and is at various intervals. Our last example of this treatment comes from the *Andante* concluding the 3rd Sonata. It is of somewhat different character, *e. g.*,



Here, although the imitation is very fragmentary, there can be no doubt as to the beauty of the effect.

In a previous paragraph we drew attention to Mendelssohn's combination of subjects, and especially of the fugue subjects of the double fugue in the 3rd Sonata. It is interesting to note that when combining fugal and Choral subjects,—as in the 1st Sonata, or when writing a double fugue over a Choral,—as in the 3rd Sonata, the two subjects are never combined in their entirety. In Ex. 12 it will be noticed that the combination of subjects does not extend beyond the initial notes of the Choral. Concerning the corresponding case in the 3rd Sonata, Professor Prout remarks:—"This fugue is a very fine specimen of its class, and it is no disparagement to Mendelssohn's genius that he has here preferred the freer style. It would have been very difficult (perhaps impossible for anyone except Bach, to whom nothing seems to have been impossible) to combine the Choral with either of the themes he had selected for his fugue. He, therefore, wisely chose rather to write an effective composition than to attempt elaborate and difficult combinations, which, had he succeeded in effecting them, would probably have smelt strongly of the lamp. An over-display of technical cleverness is very likely to be dry."

While discussing the characteristics of Mendelssohn's fugal methods, as exemplified in his Organ Sonatas, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that all his fugal movements are, really, *fugati*, and not strict fugues. Of these movements the clearest and most vocal is the *Fuga* of the 6th Sonata. As a rule Mendelssohn's fugal writing was not conspicuous for its clearness. Says Professor Prout,—“Mendelssohn was in many respects so consummate a master of composition, that it is surprising to find the part-writing in his instrumental fugues very loose,—we were almost going to say slipshod. Some of the fugues in the organ sonatas and in the pianoforte works defy all attempts to put them into score; the parts cross in the most perplexing way, or appear and disappear suddenly in the middle of a phrase.” Here are two typical examples, the first from the *Fuga* of the 2nd Sonata,



the second from the *Finale* of the 4th Sonata:—



In both these cases it is the alto part which loses itself by being merged into the treble. For this procedure there seems no adequate reason. It was by no means characteristic of the composer of whom Mr. H. F. Chorley once said, "With him there was no slovenliness, no taking for granted, no gross and blurred manuscript, no hurried pages, and no flagrant platitudes thrust in to do emergency work." Yet there is no denying that, in the matter of clearness, Mendelssohn's fugal writing leaves, in places, much to be desired.

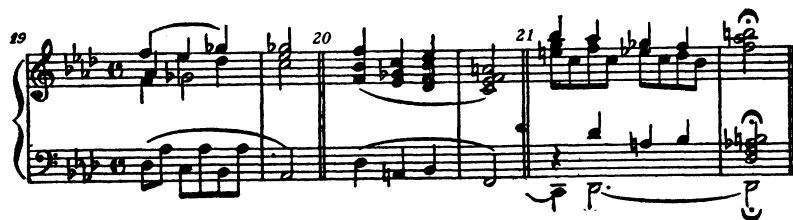
One striking peculiarity of Mendelssohn's fugal writing still remains to be noticed. This is his fondness for the introduction of counterpoint of the 3rd species after the enunciatory section, or towards the close of the fugue. Outside the Organ Sonatas an appropriate example of this treatment would be found in the Overture to *St. Paul*, or in the Pianoforte Fugue in E minor, Op. 35, No. 1. In the pages of the Organ Sonatas this mannerism is most strikingly exhibited in the fugal movements of the 2nd and 3rd Sonatas. In the first of these instances the quickened action commences after the enunciatory section; in the second case it occurs throughout the working of the second subject of the double fugue. These examples are too lengthy to permit of, and too well-known to require quotation.

Writing to the composer on the 22nd of October, 1845, Schumann said concerning these Sonatas, "No one else writes such fine harmonies." We regret the more, in view of this quotation, that our space will not permit us to say much about the harmonic peculiarities of these works. But there are a few points of interest we must not ignore. The first of these is Mendelssohn's apparent fondness for terminating movements with an unadorned presentation of a phrase in full harmony of five or more parts,

e. g., the closing bars of the first movement of the 1st Sonata, and those of the *Andante Recit.* of the same work; the last phrase of the 5th Sonata; and the employment, in full harmony, of the last two phrases of the Choral prior to the entry of the *Fuga* in the 6th Sonata.

The mention of closing harmonies reminds us of Mendelssohn's frequent employment of chromatic harmony in approaching his cadences. Thus, at the close of the first movement of the 1st Sonata, we have a modulation into G♭, the return to F minor being affected by means of a dominant 7th in G♭ quitted as an augmented 6th in F minor. The cadence measures leading from the *Andante* to the *Finale* in the same Sonata show the effective employment of chromatic chords in C minor and F minor. In the 2nd Sonata the close of the *Grave* movement exhibits skilful use of the tonic 9th and of the dominant 11th with major 9th in C minor; the augmented 6th is introduced into the final phrase of the *Adagio*; while the penultimate chord in the cadence of the *Allegro maestoso* is a dominant minor 9th over a tonic pedal. The penultimate chord of the 3rd Sonata is a supertonic 9th (B sharp-C natural) over a tonic pedal. The close of the *Allegretto* of the 4th Sonata shows an inverted tonic pedal and a plagal cadence with a subdominant *minor* chord. The cadence of the *Andante con moto* of the 5th Sonata is a charming example of the "pathetic" cadence; while the *Finale* affords a good example of a dominant 11th with a minor 9th resolved upon a supertonic 7th. Both the Chorals in Sonatas 5 and 6 close with chromatic harmonies under an inverted tonic pedal. The original autograph of the Organ Sonatas differs considerably from the published version in respect of the concluding measures of the first movement of the 1st Sonata and the Choral of the 5th Sonata. But in both cases the chromatic harmony in approaching the cadence is most conspicuous. Nor was Mendelssohn's partiality for chromatic harmony exhibited only at the cadence. There is abundant employment of it in the first and third movements of the 1st Sonata, in the *Grave* of the 2nd Sonata, in the *fugati* of the 3rd Sonata, in the second subject of the *Andante* and in the development portion of the *Finale* of the 5th Sonata, as well as in many other places too numerous to mention.

Another harmonic characteristic of these Sonatas was the placing of an unresolved discord at the end of a phrase. We quote three examples from the first movement of the 1st Sonata, leaving our readers to discover the location of the quotations for themselves:—



Exs. 19 & 20, it will be observed, show the dominant 7th at the end of a phrase. In the connection these chords are immediately resolved in a *lower* octave, this method of resolution being another harmonic peculiarity to be found in the pages of these Sonatas. The last quotation is a striking example of the employment of the augmented (German) 6th at the end of a phrase. Another remarkable case is that of the *Recitativo* movement of the 1st Sonata. Here, every *fortissimo* utterance of Clav. I., except the first two and the last, ends upon a discord. This discord is never resolved upon the same clavier. Sometimes its resolution is deferred for some measures after its percussive. The fragment of the dominant 7th in F, sustained over the long pedal sequence just before the *Coda* to the *Finale* of the 1st Sonata, is, really, another example of a discord at the end of a phrase. The 5th measure of the *Allegro* from the 2nd Sonata shows similar treatment, and resolution in the octave below. There are also other examples of this procedure in the same movement. In the 3rd Sonata we meet with it again at the close of the double fugue, where the phrases for full organ (giving out in full harmony, over a rapid pedal passage of broken 3rds, the initial notes of the first fugue subject) end with a chord of the dominant 7th. A good example from the 4th Sonata can be found in the *Andante* where, just before the recapitulation of the first subject, a phrase for Clav. I. ends upon a supertonic 7th in B♭. Towards the close of the development portion of the *Finale* of the 5th Sonata we have the first inversion of the supertonic minor 9th in D ending a phrase, and continued in arpeggio figures for four measures before resolving into the tonic chord. Lastly we would refer our readers to the end of the fourth variation of the 6th Sonata. Here not only is the Variation proper concluded with an unresolved harmony expressed in arpeggio, but when the first and last lines of the Choral are introduced to form a *Coda*, the first line instead of terminating with a tonic chord ends on the tonic 7th in D minor, which, in the next phrase, is quitted as a dominant 7th in G minor.

The general purity of Mendelssohn's part-writing is well seen in these works, spite of the doubtful examples we quoted from two of his fugal movements. As a matter of fact there are only three instances, in the whole of the six Sonatas, of Mendelssohn doubling the pedal bass by the manuals in the unison or in the octave above. Strange to say, the first of these instances is to be found in the very opening measure of the 1st Sonata. Here the manuals double the pedals in the octave above. The second instance is found at the commencement of the second subject of the first movement of the 4th Sonata. Here the doubling is at the unison. The last instance is in the 4th Variation of the 6th Sonata, at the point where,—with the Choral and the arpeggio accompaniment both in the manuals,—the pedal reinforces the penultimate and final basses of each cadence. In two of these eight cadences the manual and pedal basses are identical.

We should like to have said something about Mendelssohn's treatment of sequences and pedal points, but can only refer our readers to one or two especially interesting examples. Perhaps the finest sequence is to be found in the development portion of the *Finale* of the 5th Sonata. The most interesting pedal point is, we think, that to be found at the end of the *Adagio* of the 1st Sonata. What variety of treatment Mendelssohn could bestow upon an inverted pedal point may be inferred by comparing that to be found at the end of the *Grave* of the 2nd Sonata with that at the end of the *Allegretto* of the 4th Sonata.





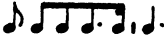
In common with other writers of premier rank, Mendelssohn's melodic treatment—as exemplified in these Sonatas—was largely founded upon scale and arpeggio figures, or a combination of both. A remarkable case is that of the *Finale* of the 1st Sonata,—a movement which Dr. A. L. Peace declares to be “one of the finest organ pieces ever written,” and “absolutely *sui generis*.” Here both the first and second subjects are, for the most part, of an arpeggio character. For a combination of arpeggio and scale what can be finer than the first subject of the first movement of the 4th Sonata? Or even the first subject of the *Finale* of the 5th Sonata?


We have already alluded to Mendelssohn's resolution of discord in the octave below. We now notice his fondness for the repetition of a melodic phrase at the octave above or below its original pitch. The latter part of the *Adagio* of the 1st Sonata contains two beautiful examples of this treatment. In the first case the melody is repeated in the tenor in the 8ve below, and in the second case at the 11th below. The opening phrases of the second

movement of the 4th Sonata show similar treatment, the melody of the first phrase forming in the 8ve below the tenor of the second phrase. The 4th Variation of the 6th Sonata is but an extended example of the same procedure,—the Choral, after a hearing in the pedals, being placed in the treble, three octaves higher. The various entries at different pitches of the second subject of the 5th Sonata (*Finale*) are of a more imitative character.

The employment of the subject by inverse movement was always a strong plank in the platform of Mendelssohnian fugue. A remarkable example of this treatment is the Pianoforte Fugue in B minor, Op. 35, No. 3. But in the Organ Sonatas instances of inverse movement are found in every *fugato* except that of the 2nd Sonata. In the first movement of the 1st Sonata we have,—as in the pianoforte fugue above referred to,—separate expositions of the fugal subject,—one in direct, the other in inverse movement,—the both being ultimately combined, at any rate as far as their initial notes are concerned. The *fugato* at the close of the 4th Sonata terminates with the subject announced by inverse movement in the pedal; while in the final section of the *Fuga* of the 6th Sonata we have in the words of Dr. C. Pearce, “a few obvious stretto points of imitation with the theme combined against itself *per moto contrario*.”

There can be no doubt that in his Organ Sonatas Mendelssohn has shown the wonderful possibilities of the organ in the direction of rhythm. Take for instance the finely contrasted rhythms of the subjects of the first movement of the 4th Sonata, as shown in Ex. 11, or the subjects of the *Finale* of the 1st Sonata.

To figures having  or its equivalent as a final rhythm, Mendelssohn seems to have been particularly partial. Thus we have  greatly in evidence in the *Allegro vivace* of the 2nd Sonata;  is the rhythm of the first figure of the first fugue subject in Sonata 3;  is the rhythm of the second subject of the first movement of the 4th Sonata; while the final *fugato* of the same work rejoices abundantly in .

All these are but different expressions of the same idea,—derivatives from the same rhythmical root. The point is, we think, quite worthy of serious attention. Another characteristic rhythm with Mendelssohn was  This is exemplified in the *Grave* of

the 2nd Sonata and in the pedal part of the 1st Variation of the 6th Sonata.

In respect of phrasing, these Sonatas are remarkable as being the first of their kind to be written with a fully phrased pedal part. This may have been one of the many things which suggested to Mendelssohn the idea of calling these works a School of Organ Playing. For in works of educational import, phrasing,—correct and complete,—is a most essential feature. A detailed analysis of Mendelssohn's system of phrasing would be impossible here. Suffice it to say that, spite of some curious slips (*e. g.*, the *Allegretto* of the 4th Sonata), he generally adhered to the classical system of phrasing; in which it was understood that a slur over more than two notes, or over two notes of considerable length, merely indicated *legato*, the final note not being shortened unless an accented note or a note immediately following an accented beat. The intelligent application of this rule would be of great service to many amateur organists essaying the performance of these works.

In matters of manual technique Mendelssohn made several important advances in these Sonatas. Undoubtedly the greatest of these is to be found in the last movement of the 1st Sonata, but the 4th Variation of the 6th Sonata makes a good second. The difference of the treatment of the arpeggio in these two movements should be carefully noticed. In the first instance several notes of the lower octave are sustained after striking; in the second instance, as in the first of the *Lieder ohne Worte*, they are entirely free. The melody accompanied by a counterpoint of the 3rd species and a detached bass, as in the *Allegretto* of the 4th Sonata, or in the 1st Variation of the 6th Sonata,—especially the former,—is a style of organ writing which has had hosts of imitators, the tribute originality has to pay to popularity.

Another prominent feature in Mendelssohn's method of manual treatment was his fondness for responsive phrases assigned to different manuals. Of this procedure the *Adagio* and *Recit.* from the 1st Sonata, the *Adagio* of the 2nd Sonata, the *Con moto* of the 3rd Sonata and its recapitulation, and the second movement of the 4th Sonata are instances, or contain instances, which will at once occur to our organ-playing readers. It must not be forgotten that in the original autograph Mendelssohn introduced nearly forty changes between Clav. I and Clav. II in the *Finale* of the 5th Sonata. But these were all abandoned in the final copy. Mere change for the sake of change was never a feature of Mendelssohn's procedure.

In the pedal technique of Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas the most noticeable points are the employment for a whole movement of the *staccato* pedal, *e. g.*, the *Andante con moto* of the 5th Sonata; and the combined *staccato* and *legato*, *e. g.*, the 2nd Variation of the 6th Sonata. Another prominent feature is Mendelssohn's great fondness for pedal scale passages. The first 14 measures of the *Finale* of the 1st Sonata form, in reality, a scale passage of an octave, the first seven measures being written an octave too high on account of the limited compass of the pedal clavier. In measure 27 of the same movement there commences a corresponding descending scale, the pedal compass again causing a "break" in the middle of the passage. Other interesting examples are to be found in the second movement of the 2nd Sonata; in the pedal solo of the 3rd Sonata,—the only one of its kind in these works,—in which we have a descending scale of two octaves; and, lastly, the magnificent scale passage at the commencement of the *Finale* of the 4th Sonata, concerning which Dr. Gauntlett once wrote, "Dwell on the heart-quivering march up the pedal and then 'give thanks' and those 'for ever'." This "heart-quivering march" occurs no less than three times in a Prelude of just over 20 measures. We could say much more on these and kindred points, but space will only allow us to remark that while in matters of pedal technique Mendelssohn shewed more indebtedness to Bach than in matters of manual technique, no example of an extended arpeggio, no double pedal, and no pedal shake are to be found in these Sonatas. Were these features omitted out of consideration for the limited pedal technique of the English organists of Mendelssohn's time,—the men for whose use these works were primarily intended? Or was it that Mendelssohn deemed these features of pedal technique foreign to his methods of organ playing or of little artistic value?

We cannot say, and are not careful to enquire. Of greater importance than these conjectures is the fact that in these works we have the composer's idea of original organ music or,—as the *Musical World* of July 24, 1845, stated in its first announcement of the publication of these works,—“specimens of what the composer himself considers his own peculiar style of performance on the organ.” That this style must have been, and still is, “worthy of all acceptance” is proved by the influence it has exerted over so many modern composers of organ music, and by the fact that after more than half a century's keen criticism and constant performance the position and popularity of these works is assured wherever there are sound musicians and efficient organists to

give them a hearing or a rendition. Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas have had many imitators. It is doubtful whether, in their own particular style, they have ever been equalled. In that style it is certain that they have never been surpassed.